

## Message Text

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PAGE 01     PORT L 01099 01 OF 02 141100Z  
ACTION AF-08

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6334

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 PORT LOUIS 1099

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PIMT MP  
SUBJECT: ELECTORAL POLL HAS INDEPENDENCE PARTY AND MMM  
          WINNING ABOUT A THIRD OF THE VOTE EACH, WITH  
          PMSD TRAILING

SUMMARY: THE INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER WEEK-END PUBLISHED A  
SPECIAL EDITION ON DECEMBER 10 GIVING THE RESULTS OF ITS  
FIRST ELECTORAL POLL, BASED ON 500 INTERVIEWS IN FOUR  
DISTRICTS. THE POLL HAD THE INDEPENDENCE PARTY (IP) AND THE  
MAURITIAN MILITANT MOVEMENT (MMM) EACH WINNING BETWEEN 30 AND  
36 PERCENT OF THE VOTE, WITH THE MAURITIAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC  
PARTY (PMSD) TAKING 19 TO 25 PERCENT. WHILE THIS POLL IS  
PROBABLY NOT WITHOUT BIAS (IN FAVOR OF THE MMM) AND IS SUBJECT  
TO CERTAIN ERRORS FROM INACCURATE SAMPLING, ITS RESULTS ARE  
BEING REPORTED IN SOME DETAIL BECAUSE: (A) IT IS THE ONLY  
POLL OF ITS KIND WHICH IS TRYING TO PREDICT THE ELECTORAL  
OUTCOME; AND (B) IT PRESENTS SOME INTERESTING VIEWS OF THE  
MAURITIAN ELECTORATE. IN ASSESSING THE POLL, IT SHOULD BE  
KEPT IN MIND THAT WEEK-END TAKES AN ANTI-GOVERNMENT AND ANTI-  
PMSD EDITORIAL LINE, AND THE SUPERVISOR OF THE POLL, HERVE  
MASSON, JR., IS CONSIDERED A MMM SYMPATHIZER. END SUMMARY

1. THE 500 INTERVIEWS WERE MADE IN THE WEEK PRIOR TO  
NOMINATION DAY (NOVEMBER 25) IN FOUR ELECTORAL DISTRICTS  
(PORT LOUIS NORD-MONTAGNE LONGUE, TRIOLET-PAMPLEMOUSSES,  
CUREPIPE-MIDLANDS, BEAU BASSIN-PETITE RIVIERE). THE RESULTS  
ARE NOT ENTIRELY RELIABLE BECAUSE: (A) THE POLL WAS TAKEN  
TOO EARLY, THAT IS, BEFORE THE NAMES OF MANY OF THE CANDIDATES  
WERE KNOWN; (B) ONLY FOUR OF THE 21 DISTRICTS WERE POLLED;  
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PAGE 02     PORT L 01099 01 OF 02 141100Z

AND (C) THE SAMPLE WAS NOT A PERFECT CROSS-SECTION OF THE

ELECTORATE.

2. THE SAMPLE, FOR EXAMPLE, WAS MADE UP NEARLY 50 PERCENT OF PEOPLE UNDER 30, WHICH IS TOO MANY, AND THE FOUR DISTRICTS POLLED ARE WEIGHTED TOWARD THE URBAN SIDE, WITH TRIOLET-PAMPLEMOUSSES BEING THE ONLY GENUINELY RURAL DISTRICT. ALSO, PMSD VOTERS WERE UNDER-REPRESENTED, FOR OF THOSE WHO VOTED IN 1967 ONLY 35 PERCENT SAID THEY HAD VOTED PMSD WHEREAS THE PMSD RECEIVED 44 PERCENT OF THE VOTE IN THAT ELECTION. THESE DISTORTIONS PROBABLY RESULT IN SOME OVER-ESTIMATION OF THE MMM STRENGTH. FURTHERMORE, THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT THE INDEPENDENCE PARTY AND THE PMSD HAVE BOTH INCREASED THEIR SUPPORT IN THE LAST TWO WEEKS WHILE THE MMM HAS SLIPPED A BIT. NEVERTHELESS, THE POLL-TAKERS SAY THEY MADE A NUMBER OF CORRELATIONS TO ADJUST THE SAMPLE TO THE TRUE POPULATION AND FOUND THESE DID NOT CHANGE THE RESULTS APPRECIABLY. IN ANY CASE, THE POLL-TAKING CONTINUES AND WILL BE EXTENDED TO OTHER DISTRICTS AND TO A MORE RECENT TIME PERIOD SO THAT BY 19 DECEMBER WHEN WEEK-END PUBLISHES ITS FINAL PROJECTION IT SHOULD BE ON A MORE RELIABLE BASIS.

3. THE RESULTS OVERALL PROJECTED FROM THIS SOUNDING INDICATE THE THE INDEPENDENCE PARTY AND THE MMM WILL EACH RECEIVE ABOUT ONE-THIRD OF THE VOTES, THE PMSD 21 PERCENT, OTHER CANDIDATES THREE PERCENT, WITH A 9 PERCENT FIGURE UNDECIDED. ALLOWING FOR A MARGIN OF ERROR OF 3 PERCENT IN EITHER DIRECTION, THE POLL GIVES THE FOLLOWING RANGE FOR PERCENTAGES OF THE POPULAR VOTE AND PROBABLE NUMBER OF SEATS:

PARTY	NO. OF VOTES	NO. OF SEATS
IP	30-36 PERCENT	21 - 30
PMSD	19-25 PERCENT	12 - 17
MMM	30 - 36 PERCENT	18-33
OTHERS	1 - 7 PERCENT	
UNDECIDED	10	

4. THE INDIVIDUAL RESULTS IN THE FOUR DISTRICTS POLLED ARE ALSO INTERESTING. WEEK-END PREDICTS THAT THE MMM WILL WIN IN PORT LOUIS NORD-MONTAGNE LONGUE, WITH THE IP TAKING SECOND PLACE OVER THE PMSD. THIS WOULD MEAN THAT THE PMSD PARTY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 PORT L 01099 01 OF 02 141100Z

LEADER, GAETAN DUVAL, RUNNING IN THAT DISTRICT WILL LOSE HIS SEAT. IN THE TRIOLET-PAMPLEMOUSSES DISTRICT THE IP IS PREDICTED TO WIN HANDIDLY WITH MORE THAN 50 PERCENT OF THE VOTE. THIS IS PRIME MINISTER RAMGOOLAM'S HOME DISTRICT. ACCORDING TO THE POLL, CUREPIPE-MIDLANDS WILL BE WON NEARLY AS EASILY BY THE PMSD, WHICH IS TRADITIONALLY VERY STRONG IN THAT DISTRICT. THE BEAU BASSIN-PETITE RIVIERE DISTRICT SHOULD BE WON BY THE MMM WITH THE PMSD COMING SECOND, ACCORD-

ING TO THE POLL.

5. A NUMBER OF OTHER INTERESTING FINDINGS RESULTED FROM THE POLL. A SERIES OF QUESTIONS SOUGHT NEGATIVE OR POSITIVE OPINIONS REGARDING THE LEADERS OF THE VARIOUS PARTIES. THE RESULTS WERE THAT THE MOST POPULAR LEADER IS PAUL BERENGER OF THE MMM, WHO HAD A SCORE OF 2.89 (1.0 WOULD BE A NEUTRAL STANDING). PRIME MINISTER RAMGOOLAM CAME SECOND WITH A SCORE OF 2.42 AND DUVAL WAS A DISTANT THIRD WITH A SCORE OF 1.65. THE ONLY PARTY LEADER TO HAVE A DECIDEDLY NEGATIVE STANDING WAS ABDOOL RAZACK MOHAMED OF THE CAM WITH A SCORE OF 0.52. SOME OF THE OTHER INTERESTING FINDINGS FOLLOW.

6. TWO-THIRDS OF THE RESPONDENTS SAID THAT THEIR ECONOMIC SITUATION HAS IMPROVED SINCE INDEPENDENCE. THESE PEOPLE ARE MORE INCLINED TO SUPPORT THE LABOR PARTY. EIGHTEEN PERCENT BELIEVE THEIR SITUATION HAS NOT CHANGED, WHILE FOURTEEN PERCENT FEEL THEY ARE WORSE OFF.

7. RESPONDENTS HAD A MORE FAVORABLE ATTITUDE TOWARD THE PT-PMSD COALITION OF 1969-73 THAN IS GENERALLY ASSUMED. RESPONDENTS WITH A POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD THE COALITION WERE 41 PERCENT, NEUTRAL 31 PERCENT, NEGATIVE 23 PERCENT, AND NO OPINION 5 PERCENT. THE POLL-TAKERS CONCLUDED THAT THE NEGATIVE IMAGE OF THE COALITION HAS BEEN EXAGGERATED.

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PAGE 01 PORT L 01099 02 OF 02 141059Z  
ACTION AF-08

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R 140745Z DEC 76  
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 PORT LOUIS 1099

8. ON THE SUBJECT OF COMMUNALISM, ONLY 15 PERCENT SAY THEY WOULD PREFER TO VOTE FOR A CANDIDATE OF THEIR OWN ETHNIC COMMUNITY, WHILE 82 PERCENT SAID THEY DO NOT DECIDE HOW TO VOTE ON THIS BASIS AND THAT A CANDIDATE'S ETHNIC BACKGROUND IS NOT VERY IMPORTANT TO THEM. THE POLL-TAKERS CONCLUDED

FROM THIS TAHT COMMUNALISM IS MUCH LESS IMPORTANT THAN  
COMMONLY BELIEVED IN MAURITIAN ELECTIONS.

9. THE POLL CONFIRMED THAT THE LABOR PARTY IS STRONG IN THE  
RURAL AREAS, AND THE PMSD IS LIMITED TO THE CITIES, WHILE  
THE MMM'S SUPPORT IS MORE OR LESS EQUALLY DIVIDED BETWEEN THE  
RURAL AND URBAN AREAS. THE FOLLOWING ARE FIGURES SHOWING  
THE DIFFERENCES IN PARTY CHOICES BETWEEN RURAL AND URBAN  
VOTERS:

PARTY	URBAN	RURAL
IP	19	50
PMSD	35	8
MMM	38	23
OTHERS	4	3
UNDECIDED	4	16

THE POLL-TAKERS CONDLUDE THAT THE URBAN-RURAL SPLIT MAY BE  
THE KEY TO THE ELECTORAL OUTCOME.

10. THE POLL CONFIRMED THAT THE IP IS SUPPORTED BY A MAJORITY  
OF INDO-MAURITIANS, WHILE THE PMSD IS STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY  
THE GENERAL POPULATION (CREOLES). THE MUSLIM POPULATION  
APPEARS TO BE SUPPORTING THE MMM TWO TO ONE OVER THE IP,  
DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE IP COALITION INCLUDES THE MUSLIM  
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PAGE 02     PORT L 01099 02 OF 02 141059Z

COMMITTEE FOR ACTION.

11. PARTY SUPPORT AMONG VARIOUS SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS IS  
ABOUT WHAT ONE WOULD ANTICIPATE. THAT IS, THE MORE  
SKILLED THE PERSON'S JOB, THE MORE LIKELY HE IS TO SUPPORT  
THE IP OR THE PMSD. THE MMM IS FAVORED BY SKILLED WORKERS  
AND UNEMPLOYED WORKERS, BUT THE IP COMES IN FIRST WITH  
UNSKILLED LABORERS (MOSTLY SUGAR CANE FIELD WORKERS).

12. AS FOR DIFFERENCES AMONG AGE GROUPS, YOUNGER VOTERS  
HEAVILY SUPPORT THE MMM OVER THE OTHER TWO MAJOR PARTIES,  
EXCPET IN THE AGE GROUP 25 TO 29 WHERE THE IP HAS THE MOST  
SUPPORT AND THE PMSD THE SECOND GREATEST SUPPORT. FOR VOTERS  
BETWEEN 30 AND 44 THE IP AND THE MMM EACH HAVE ABOUT ONE-  
THIRD OF THE VOTE WITH THE PMSD TRAILING. THOSE BETWEEN 45  
AND 55 FAVOR THE PMSD OVER THE OTHER TWO PARTIES. OLDER  
PEOPLE, THAT IS OVER AGE 55, CLEARLY FAVOR THE IP.

13. IN ANALYZING THE SECOND AND THIRD PARTY CHOICES OF  
RESPONDENTS, THE POLL-TAKERS FOUND THAT THE IP SUPPORTERS  
ARE MOST HOSTILE TO THE MMM, WHICH IS ALSO TRUE OF THE PMSD  
VOTERS. AS FOR THE MMM, ITS SUPPORTERS ARE MOST HOSTILE TO  
THE IP, WHICH INDICATES THAT THE MMM IS AN ANTI-GOVERNMENT

PARTY.

14. ON DECEMBER 12, IN ITS REGULAR EDITION, WEEK-END PUBLISHED THE RESULTS OF ITS POLLING IN THREE ADDITIONAL DISTRICTS. TWO OF THEM (FLACQ-BON ACCUEIL AND MAHEBOURG-PLAINE MAGNIEN) SHOWED FAIRLY DECISIVE WINS BY THE MMM OVER THE INDEPENDENCE PARTY, WHICH WON THESE DISTRICTS LAST TIME. THE PMSD CAME IN A VERY WEAK THIRD IN BOTH DISTRICTS, ACCORDING TO THE POLL. IN THE THIRD DISTRICT POLLED (BELLE-ROSE-QUATRE BORNES), THE PMSD WAS SHOWN AS WINNING, WITH THE MMM TICKET LED BY PARTY LEADER PAUL BERENGER COMING IN A CLOSE SECOND BUT NOT WINNING A SEAT.

15. WEEK-END THEN PROCEEDED TO "EXTRAPOLATE" THE RESULTS FROM THE SEVEN DISTRICTS IT HAS POLLED THUS FAR, BUT IN A HIGHLY QUESTIONABLE MANNER. THE RESULT OF THIS EXTRAPOLATION IS A PREDICTION THAT THE THREE MAIN MAURITIAN PARTIES WILL WIN THE FOLLOWING NUMBER OF SEATS, THE LOWER FIGURE BEING AN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03      PORT L 01099 02 OF 02 141059Z

"ASSURED" MINIMUM AND THE SECOND FIGURE BEING A "POSSIBLE" MAXIMUM:

PARTY	SEATS
IP	15-21
PMSD	14-17
MMM	24-36

16. THESE RESULTS, HIGHLY FAVORABLE TO THE MMM, ARE BASED ON SUCH QUESTIONABLE ASSUMPTIONS AS THAT THE PMSD WILL LOSE ALL THREE PORT LOUIS DISTRICTS BECAUSE IT IS LOSING DISTRICT WHERE DUVAL IS RUNNING AND WHICH CONTAINS A PART OF THE CITY. AND THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE INDEPENDENCE PARTY IS SURE OF WINNING ONLY HALF OF THE TEN RURAL DISTRICTS BECAUSE THE POLL SHOWS IT LOSING TWO OF THEM TO THE MMM. IT MAKES ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT DISTRICTS WHERE IT HAS DONE NO POLLING. THE PAPER PROMISES TO HAVE A MORE THOROUGH RESULT AT THE END OF THE WEEK FOLLOWING POLLING IN ADDITIONAL DISTRICTS.

17. LE CERNEEN AND LE POPULAIRE HAVE BOTH CRITICIZED THE WEEK-END POLL AS BEING DECIDEDLY BIASED IN FAVOR OF THE MMM. SUNDAY'S L'EXPRESS HAS A POLL OF ONE DISTRICT ONLY, THE RIVIERE DES ANGUILLES-SOUILAC DISTRICT IN THE SOUTH. THIS POLL, DONE BY THE "MAURITIAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC OPINION", WHICH IS A NEW ORGANIZATION, WAS COMPLETED ON DECEMBER 5 AND APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN CARRIED OUT IN A HIGHLY PROFESSIONAL MANNER, WITH ADJUSTMENTS MADE FOR ALL DEVIATIONS FROM A TRUE CROSS-SECTION OF THE ELECTORATE. THIS POLL INDICATED THAT THE INDEPENDENCE PARTY WOULD WIN ALL THREE SEATS IN THIS DISTRICT HANDIDLY WITH 48 PERCENT VOTE, AGAINST 27 PERCENT

FOR THE MMM, 10 PERCENT FOR THE PMSD, ONE PERCENT FOR THE  
IFB, AND 14 PERCENT UNDECIDED. A GOOD INDICATION THAT THE  
WEEK-END POLL MAY BE BIASED IS THAT ITS POLL AWARDED THIS  
DISTRICT TO THE MMM BASED ON AN INCOMPLETE SURVEY.  
KEELEY

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## Message Attributes

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